4:Huntingford E-5 (1938-1939) 1951 FL6 Dorobo FL6

597 [848] Adoption is also practised when an unmarried girl has a baby. In such cases it may be adopted by a childless couple, i. e. who have lost their children, or whose children have grown up and left them, but mostly (on the rare occasions when it occurs) the former. An adopted child has the status of a man's own child. Adoption may in certain cases be by previous arrangement. It has happened, I was told, that a person who has cattle or means of getting milk may hear that a certain girl has got pregnant, and gives notice that he will adopt the child when it comes. The mother of the girl accordingly tells him when the girl "enters the hut", and the adopter's wife fetches the baby to her own home as soon as it born. She feeds it with milk from a small horn, and the Dorobo reckon that such babies will do all right, for they say, "such a child need not suck for very long". Illegitimate children are killed if nobody can be found to adopt them. [848] [847]

5. Adultery and divorce

684 Adultery may be punished by a husband who catches his wife with another man, by shooting the male offender with an arrow. If he kills him, he has to pay the normal compensation for homicide. He may also beat his wife, after which he "waits till she has got sense", as they put it, when he buys a goat for her, which they eat together. A man does not divorce his wife for a single act of adultery, but only if she is a bad and neglectful wife who is continually caught with other men.

586 When a man has, after much thought, made up his mind to divorce his wife, he calls in one of his relatives to help him perform the divorce ceremony. Taking a piece of liana, he rubs earth on it and gives one end to his relative to hold, taking the other end himself, the wife being present and looking on. They then break the liana in two, the man saying to his wife, *Kaail katunisiet kuu kiil poroanni, ui ka, pakaktan* ("I have broken our marriage as this liana has been broken: go home and leave me"). He can then claim the return of the live stock which he paid to her father. But only a woman who has not borne her husband a child can be divorced; once there has been a child, no divorce is possible, for the birth of a child completes the union, which once completed is indissoluble. [581]

6. Polygyny

595 In theory a Dorobo can have as many wives as he can pay for, which means that usually a man has but one wife at a time. Polygyny may therefore be said to be non-existent. The only thing that does occur is the 587 occasional re-marriage of a man after the death or desertion of his wife, of which I recorded three cases. Widows, again, seldom re-marry, living normally either with their husbands' brothers, returning to their parents, or even living alone. In one genealogy, however, I found a woman who was married to four successive husbands, none of whom was her husband's brother, and having as issue but one daughter. The Dorobo themselves remarked upon this succession of marriages as being a most unusual occurrence.